

TEXAS

1. Memorandum of Understanding with Spain – Spain is home to a wide variety of languages and cultures and to a population that is the result of historic interrelations between peoples of very diverse origin, each with its own traditions and languages. This historical reality has made it possible for Spain to experience bilingual education, the teaching of other languages, and diverse school settings. Spain, therefore, is historically and culturally close to Texas and in a remarkable position to be able to collaborate, not only with Texas, but also with other states in the Union, in educational programs designed to enrich both communities.

The partnership with Spain began in 1987 with the implementation of the Summer Institutes program at the Texas Education Agency, and further validated with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in 1993 and the signing of a second Memorandum between the Ministry of Education and Culture of Spain, the Texas Education Agency, and the State Board for Educator Certification in 1997.

Under the Memorandum of Understanding of 1993, the Ministry of Education and Culture (MEC) of Spain and the Texas Education Agency (TEA) assumed important responsibilities in a spirit of educational cooperation. Products of this cooperation were a Resource Center for teachers at the University of Houston and summer institutes for Texas teachers at universities in Spain. Under the MOU signed in 1997, the Ministry and the Agency have initiated, with the participation of interested school districts, educational programs designed to improve and expand the teaching of the Spanish language and culture in Texas, as well as the teaching of the English language and culture in Spain, setting high academic standards for students in both countries. A third MOU is projected for signing in late 2002.

In fifteen years of collaboration, and more specifically in the last five years since the 1997 Memorandum, teachers and students in both Texas and Spain have gained in many ways from the implementation of the series of programs known as the Texas-Spain Initiatives. Language programs in school districts in Texas such as dual language programs, additional Spanish for Spanish speakers, and Spanish as a Foreign Language courses have benefited from the opportunities these programs provide.

2. Texas/Spain Visiting Teacher Program – The Texas/Spain Visiting Teacher Program offers school districts a unique resource to supplement and enrich their overall instructional program. Participating districts have an opportunity to initiate cultural exchanges by recruiting qualified teachers from Spain while at the same time sending their own teachers and/or students to Spain. The program provides school districts with access to teachers with the Spanish language skills needed to provide second language instruction to students in Languages Other Than English programs, or primary language instruction to limited English proficient Spanish-speaking students. Teachers from Spain participating in this program do not provide English or English as a Second Language instruction to students. This program provides students, parents, and educators the opportunity to work with professionals from another country. As the visiting teachers begin to interact within and beyond the school, an appreciation for the cultures that Texas and Spain share begins to grow and cross-cultural understandings begin to be possible.
 - In 1998, the Visiting Teacher Program began with 45 teachers from Spain teaching Spanish in Texas schools; since then the program has grown steadily to the point where there are now 209 teachers in elementary, middle and high schools in 14 districts in the state;

- Eleven teachers from Spain and eleven teachers from Texas have taken part in a Post-to-Post Teacher Exchange Program between 1998 and 2001.

The beneficiaries of these programs are the teachers of Texas, on the one hand, and the visiting teachers from Spain who avail themselves of the opportunity to spend three years teaching in Texas schools under our Exchange Programs and return to their country to carry out their professional duties. These teachers make great gains professionally from the years spent in this state; Texas is proud to be able to offer them this type of experience, and the Ministry of Education in Spain has increasingly found that the professional development they acquire in the program provides ultimately enrichment to the Spanish educational system on their return.

3. Summer Institutes – Universities in different regions of Spain offer courses in Spanish Language and Culture, held each year in the month of July. Participants are teachers of Spanish as a second or foreign language and teachers of Spanish for Spanish speakers, kindergarten-grade 12. The Institutes focus on improving and strengthening the Spanish proficiency of the teachers, successful instructional approaches for teaching Spanish as a second language and participants' knowledge of the cultural reality of Spain today. The Universidad Complutense in Madrid offers a course in Children's Literature designed specifically for bilingual education professionals. In 2002, in collaboration with the Universities of Granada and Santiago, a new initiative was launched for school administrators and other non-teaching staff who wish to begin their study of Spanish.

Spain's Ministry of Education and Culture provides participants with a partial scholarship to help defray the cost of the Institute. Participants pay for transportation and the remaining cost of the Institute. Over the years since the program began in 1987, hundreds of teachers from Texas have availed themselves of these Embassy of Spain partial scholarships to attend Summer Institutes each year as the program offers teachers in Texas a unique professional development opportunity. Since the last Memorandum was signed in 1997, two hundred and eighty-two teachers have participated in this program, eighty-four in July 2002.

4. Student Exchange Program – The Student Exchange Program supports foreign language education in Texas schools by encouraging students to extend language study outside the school. The program offers high school students from Texas and students from Spain language and cultural experiences that reinforce their study of Spanish and English, respectively. During their stay in the host country, students receive first hand knowledge of geography, multiculturalism, environmental impact, and the social and political influences that are shaping the United States and Spain today. Participants follow the regular school schedule of the host school, meet community leaders, and visit key cultural and historical sites. All expenses incurred in the exchange are paid either by the host school or the students' host families.

In the course of a Texas-Spain Student Exchange in 2000, high school students from Beeville High School in Texas visited the school and homes of students from the Spanish high school Instituto Dragó in Cádiz, Spain, over Spring Break; the Cádiz students visited Beeville a month later and the exchange has since been repeated.

5. Ruta Quetzal Student Scholarship Program – The Quetzal, a rare and beautiful species of bird found in the tropical forest of Costa Rica, has given its name to this journey and learning experience, now a tradition for selected students from 43 countries, who spend six weeks traveling within Spain and through North and South American countries, accompanied by researchers, experts and teachers, meeting the Spanish speaking peoples of the countries they visit on their way. Under the auspices of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Spain and UNESCO, the program aims to bring together young Americans and Europeans in the study of the historical and cultural past they hold in common.

Texas school districts are invited each year to participate in the selection of a student to represent the State of Texas in the Ruta Quetzal-Argentaria expedition and study program. The scholarship, with an estimated value of \$14,000, covers travel expenses from Miami/New York to Madrid and back, study expenses and the expedition throughout Spain and other countries in the Americas. Three high school students from Texas have had the opportunity to visit Spain and South and Central America as winners of the Texas-Spain Ruta Quetzal Scholarship Program since 1999.

6. Foreign Guest Staff – Under the terms of the 1997 Memorandum, the Visiting Consultant from Spain at the Texas Education Agency, Ms. María Silvia Roche-Dolán, represents the Ministry of Education and Culture in the Curriculum and Professional Development Division at the Agency in Austin. Ms. Roche, her predecessors, and her colleagues at the Education Office of the Consulate-General of Spain in Houston, have collaborated in the successful implementation of the programs described in the successive MOUs signed with the Ministry of Spain in the State of Texas. Working closely with staff at the Texas Education Agency, Ms. Roche maintains contact with district authorities and visiting teachers regarding a wide range of matters, helps implement the Summer Institute Program, participates in the selection process for the Ruta Quetzal scholarship for Texas high school students, and provides information for educators in schools in Texas and Spain that seek to establish student exchange visits.
7. International Spanish Academies – ISA's are a collaborative effort between the Ministry of Education and Culture of Spain and the United States and Canadian educational administrations consisting of an education curriculum in English and Spanish. ISA's are established in schools or sections of a school that are in a position to initiate or further develop a curriculum of quality education in English and Spanish. The Ministry of Education and Culture of Spain facilitates the availability of the following resources and programs: specialized visiting teachers, teacher exchanges with Spain, language/culture assistants, teacher training courses at Spanish universities, specific teacher training activities in the United States, student exchanges, sister schools in Spain, participation in a network of ISA's in North America, classroom and curricular materials and resources, pedagogic guidance, and development of educational projects with Spanish schools using Internet support. In those cases in which the ISA meets the academic requirements established by Spanish legislation, the Ministry of Education and Culture of Spain certifies the studies completed by students. While the ISA's are provided for in the Texas-Spain Memorandum of Understanding, none has yet become operational in the state.

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